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UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 001984

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STATE FOR WHA/CEN, WHA/PPC, WHA/USOAS, AND DRL/PHD  
STATE PASS AID FOR LAC/CEN AND DCHA/DG

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: HONDURAN ELECTIONS NEWS: UPDATE 5

REF: (A) Tegucigalpa 1968

(B) Tegucigalpa 1949

(C) Tegucigalpa 1680

(D) Tegucigalpa 1665

#### Political Parties Fail to File Campaign Finances Statements

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1. The Supreme Electoral Tribunal (TSE) has decided that since political parties have not heeded the institution's request made in various occasions to divulge their financial statements, they will have to give them a deadline and notify the parties in writing. A number of commentators have expressed their doubts about the funding sources utilized in the various political campaigns. The TSE had repeatedly approached the various parties to remind them

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that campaign funding has to be reported according to the new Electoral Law, but to no avail. The Electoral Law states in Article 87 "that political parties must establish accounting systems which permit the efficient control of their finances and they will present to the TSE reports of the deposits and withdrawals enclosing the origin of the funds and the destination of the funds. The reports must contain the general balance and the accounts receivable audited for each fiscal year and separately from each electoral process. The parties must keep records and documentation of for a period of five years. The TSE is mandated to publish the financial statements."

2. The Electoral Law also establishes that contributions or donations that are superior to 120 minimum salaries, or 250,000 lempiras (USD 13,228), must be registered with the TSE. If the parties continue to ignore the directive they can be fined for double the amount registered the first time and triple the amount, if they fail to do so the second time. The campaign donations must be deposited in national banking institutions, in their party name and at the disposal of the party authorities determined by the party statutes.

#### Campaign Information Booths Restricted on Election Day

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3. Police will be in charge of dismantling campaign information booths that are less than 50 meters from the voting tables. Campaign information booths are normally set up by parties in order to give information to the electorate, including identifying which voting table a prospective voter is assigned. Should the party representatives manning the campaign information booths resist moving the installation, the police will have the authority to dismantle the booth and detain the party representatives. Less clear is how the police will deal with party representatives soliciting votes and passing out campaign material near polling stations in a more surreptitious way.

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